

Finding the right experience

News students at Ball State learn in a new way with
NewsLink Indiana

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Abstract

NewsLink Indiana gives news students at Ball State the opportunity to serve as reporters and photographers gathering news and producing it daily. The immersion program gives each participating student 12 credits for his or her work in what is essentially a 9-to-5 work atmosphere in news broadcasted on Muncie's WIPB-TV. I decided to find out what it is like to go through this program for the students involved so that other students and prospective immersion participants can find out more about the program. I followed different student news crews through their process of coming up with stories, going out and finding them, and then piecing them together in the editing room. My video shows frustrations, triumphs, and relationships all formed at NewsLink Indiana in an effort to simultaneously provide news for East Central Indiana and give students practical experience. I found that the students are pleased overall with this form of experience, and most of them would suggest it to incoming students. I also found that it is not an easy 12 credits for these students, but, by the end of the semester, the students' reflection showed their appreciation for such an opportunity.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank, first of all, Phil Bremen for serving as my advisor on this project. Also, I want to thank those in NewsLink Indiana for allowing me unlimited access in their process, as well as the use of their equipment for both video shooting and editing. Specifically, I want to thank the crews who allowed me to go out on stories and interrupt their news gathering, including: Derek Tucker, Svenja Stickert, Alyssa Ivanson, Chris Soltesz, Jennifer Kinley, and Gerry Fernandez. I would also like to thank Chloe Widdifield for helping me to stay focused especially through the editing process, so that I would make sure to come out with a good finished product.

Going inside a television newsroom could be an exciting prospect for any person undertaking a creative project. There is constant movement and excitement as the deadline is on everyone's minds. Pressure surrounds the people within, but one cannot truly understand that feeling or experience until he or she either goes through it or at least gets to see it in person. I have now gotten to do both as I went through the NewsLink Indiana "immersion" program in the summer of 2004. For my thesis, it seemed logical to try and explain to people through a video how NewsLink works and how hard the people in it work. I know how good my experience with the immersion program was, but now I feel like I can speak for more people when I say that Newslink Indiana provides news students in the telecommunications program at Ball State with practical experience they could never get in a classroom. That's the impression the managing editor and head advisor of the immersion program, Terry Heifetz, leaves with viewers of my video at the end. He states that immersion provides students with the "knowledge of the real world."

I wanted to put that to the test by following the students in the immersion program and capturing their experience on video. I also wanted to ask their opinions on the importance and value of what they were doing, both to themselves and to the community. The results of my human research favored the continuation of a program that has gotten a lot of funding but still remains unknown to many other Ball State students and people in east central Indiana. NewsLink Indiana gives experience to students in the field of news while also providing a community service, so I feel that people in this community and others should understand what the immersion program consists of and why it is important.

To do this, I had to decide on this topic while I was still participating in immersion. I actually got the idea before I even went through immersion, having heard about it and how innovative it was before I got to see firsthand. I knew that I would have to start documenting experience right in the beginning to see how the students, or “reporters,” changed as the semester went along. I decided upon a format where I would split the students’ experience into three distinctive parts. First, I would shadow the students’ development of story ideas both in the morning meeting and then as they developed stories with phone calls and research. I taped this portion at the beginning of the semester because it is the part that takes place in the beginning of the day. I continued this pattern by going out on stories with three crews in the middle of the semester. I spent the most time on this part because this is generally where students spend most of their time in the immersion program. Also, when one thinks of news reporting, it is often not thoughts of a meeting, but rather of a reporter and photographer going out and finding a story in the field. The last portion of my project focused on the end of the semester and the end of the day, which involves the editing of news “packages.” This period of the day and the semester also lends itself to more reflection as students are either excited to be done with the day and semester, or frustrated with faulty equipment, unrealistic demands, and more. The three segments are broken up purposely to guide outsiders through the news process at Newslink Indiana.

I finished my experience at Newslink Indiana on August 20, and it was only a few days later when I embarked on the beginning of my taping. The new immersion students took over right away after that weekend, and I was there on the first Friday to report their feelings and impressions of the first week. I also wanted to know their expectations and,

thus, how the program was living up to those expectations. I felt it was important to show some of the meeting, but it was even more important to hear from the students to understand their individual situations. Again, I decided to link the early part of the day with the early part of the semester so that the video would have some continuity to it. That way, viewers can follow students through a day, but also through the entire experience with a brief look at the responsibilities of young news gatherers in immersion. In the final product, I did not focus much on the beginning of the day because it is often bypassed if stories are already set up for that day. Also, the video is simply not as interesting with shots of people in meetings or at desks.

I chose four students as interview subjects for the first video segment. Gerry Fernandez gave me a good quote when it came to the development of story ideas and his struggle with gaining approval. Then, I got Kevin O'Connor and Randy Rankin to describe the expectations put on them and their expectations for the remainder of the semester. Finally, Chris Soltesz, who participated in the program in the fall of 2003 when it was first offered, gave me a deeper reason for why students should consider NewsLink Indiana. He decided to do it and continue helping with it because it provided him with the real world experience that "you can't get in the classroom" and that employers desire.

After talking to students in that first week and the weeks to come for the first segment of my video, I decided to go after the main part of the project. Starting in mid-September, I went out on stories with three news crews to see what the "meat" of the day is like for immersion students. I chose crews based on availability, but I wanted to make sure that I got different people because I wanted everyone involved in immersion to have

some part in my video. It made sense to use three crews so that, if one group's story fell through and another was good, there would be one more to essentially break the tie. When taping the crews, I thought it was important to tape different things with each group.

My first "ride-along" came with Derek Tucker and Svenja Stickert, a German exchange student eager to work in news production. Stickert had not gone out on her own story before that time, but she was willing to be followed to see how it went. She served as reporter while Tucker was the photographer, or cameraman. They also happened to have two younger news students shadowing them as a class assignment to see how reporters go after stories. I wanted to focus on Tucker on this day to show what it can be like to carry heavy equipment in an effort to capture the essence of a story. I tried to tape Tucker from the time where he put the equipment into his car until he got back into the car with a completed story. I did that by showing his creative process in steps and hearing from him along the way. I also got to hear from Stickert as she explained what it was like to be a reporter on a first story. I felt as if the shots of Tucker working were some of my best because I showed that this immersion program is truly work. I also think Tucker's thoughts and actions are telling, as he remains positive and focused throughout the process.

I went on a second story two weeks later with Alyssa Ivanson and Soltesz, who rarely is called upon to go into the field. He traditionally serves as the producer of the three news briefs that air in the evening, late at night, and early the next morning. On this day, however, he and Ivanson traveled to Winchester, a small town in Randolph County, one of the eight counties covered by NewsLink in east central Indiana. I felt I had gotten

good footage of the photographer's work, so I put my focus more on the reporter for this story, Ivanson. I put a wireless microphone on her for as long as the batteries would last, and it contrasts well with Tucker's part. With Tucker as the photographer, I emphasized actions over words and tried to make it look like it was hard to keep up with him. Then, with Ivanson as the reporter, the spoken word comes to the forefront because reporters must be persuasive and confident with their language. Unfortunately for the crew, their story ran into several snags, but that just provided more contrast for me and my video. Whereas the segment on Tucker showed a primarily successful day of reporting, Ivanson and Soltesz struggled through a day they might want to try and forget. The struggles are documented because it is necessary to show how much resolve it takes to be a reporting crew, especially in small towns where people seem to often be afraid of a news camera. This topic would be worth further exploration and research in an effort to find the audience.

Originally, I had planned on going out with only two crews, but, after seeing the contrast between those two, I decided to see what I could find with one more. I knew I had enough footage of students working in the field, but I also knew that it is good to get more footage than you think when it comes to visually-oriented projects. I wanted my video to contain engaging shots throughout, so it was a good idea to follow one more crew and see how their story panned out. The producers assigned a story on Toys 'R' Us icon Geoffrey the Giraffe's appearance at Storer Elementary to Gerry Fernandez and Jennifer Kinley. Both of them seemed pleased to be given a story without controversy on a Friday in October. I did not try to capture anything specific from the two crew members, but I wanted to hear how they felt about following around a guy in a giraffe

suit on a Friday afternoon. Kinley gave me a revealing sound bite, as she told of her affinity for “fluffy” stories that do not show any person in pain. As she told me this, I realized that I had not gone with a crew on a hard news story, but it did not seem like a problem. Crime stories, deaths, and meetings are a part of the news, but those stories do not get as much attention at NewsLink Indiana because of the limited resources the station has in comparison to WRTV or WTHR in Indianapolis. NewsLink Indiana can not do live television broadcasts very often, so hard news is not put at such a premium. It does get covered by Newslink, but I did not feel like I had to cover the reporting of those kinds of stories in my video.

Once I got through the middle portion of the taping, it was time to show the mixed emotions that can come as a result of video editing. I went in on two separate occasions in November to watch the students at work towards the end of the day and the end of their time in the program. As I mentioned, many of the students were willing to reflect on their experience deeply to tell why they felt like immersion was worthwhile. At this point, I interview students I had not talked to yet including Stephanie Champlain. I also spoke with Sarah Grote, who participated in immersion over the summer with me. I wanted to hear from her to see why she felt like remaining involved with NewsLink Indiana as a paid employee even after immersion. I also spoke with two of the advisors from immersion, Chris Bavender and Terry Heifetz. I placed their comments at the end of the video because each of them summarized the reasoning behind getting involved with the program. I had plenty of video footage of students editing packages, but I felt that interviews were even more important at this point to bring the video to a close with reflection. I also got to see some frustration from both Lee Atherton and Derek Tucker,

though Tucker's reactions seemed slightly exaggerated. Still, he and Atherton expressed feelings that many people seem to have when it comes to editing news packages. Many things can go wrong at that point in the day, including the discovery of a lack of good shots, faulty computers, or insistent demands from student producers or advisors. Once I had good interviews and shots of the editing process, I was ready to partake in that same process myself.

Editing did not take up as much time as shooting all of the footage, but it was just as challenging. I split up the process by first inputting all of my video into the computer system at NewsLink Indiana, which takes as long as the amount of footage one has. In this case, I had used up about 2 and one-half hours of video on this project, so I had to take that much time to put it all on to a computer. While I inputted the video, I took notes on what the shots looked like and took notice of good sound bites from my interviews. This came in handy when I went through all of the video later in that week in December and picked out all of the sound bites and shots that I felt like I had to have in my video. Once I had that all spread out in front of me, I needed to build a script for me to read around the quotes. I wanted the students and advisors to tell the story and explain the program, but I knew that I would have to do some of that explaining myself. In news classes, we students learn that the reporter can often sum up the story better than the interviewee. Bites from them should be reserved for comments based on emotion or experience. I strayed very little from that principle, but, overall, I wanted to limit how much my voice had to be in the video. I ended up doing a stand-up where I close out the piece so that there would be a closing with my own touch. Still, even though I had

experienced immersion, but this video was about this particular semester's group of news gatherers.

I planned for the video to be 8 to 10 minutes, and I ended up with just under 9. I felt as if the undertaking of a video thesis project had been successful because I got to show what NewsLink Indiana was about and in an appropriate amount of time. I did not want it to be more than 10 minutes because I felt like that could potentially be boring and the details could be described in less time. My favorite moment came when I completed the editing process and many of the students in immersion got to view my video. Excitement overcame them as they realized how much work they had put in this semester but also how much they had learned. It was fun for me to see immediate gratification for all of my work to document their experience. I probably would not have attempted this project without my summer experience, but I am grateful for all that I learned over the summer and during my observational project. Pandemonium can prevail in newsrooms, particularly when students are involved, but the fact that there even is a full-time television news service on Ball State's campus is a fascinating thing. More students, faculty, parents, and community members need to know about NewsLink Indiana and its service, and I hope that my video can help show how important the immersion program has been at Ball State.

SCRIPT

12/16/2004 11:37:43, USER Marquis, Andy [INews]SHOW.NEWSLINK.5:30-PM.HOLDSTORIES 1 SLUG Andy-don't delete

SCRIPT FOR HONORS THESIS VIDEO--ANDY
MARQUIS

THESE STUDENT REPORTERS WORK ALL DAY,
EVERY DAY IN A SEMESTER FILLED WITH
EXPERIENCE. THEY'RE IN A UNIQUE PROGRAM AT
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY THAT HELPS PRODUCE
REAL-WORLD TALENT.
NATURAL SOUND BREAK

WELCOME TO NEWSLINK INDIANA WHERE THE DAY
STARTS WITH THE MORNING MEETING AND THE
PITCHING OF STORY IDEAS. HERE, IT'S STILL THE
FIRST WEEK SO SOME OF THE STORIES ARE,
WELL, LAUGHABLE.

GERRY FERNANDEZ/IMMERSION STUDENT

((SOT))

"I STARTED OUT PRETTY BAD . . . BUT, TODAY I
ACTUALLY GAVE A STORY IDEA WE'RE GOING TO
USE, SO I'M PRETTY EXCITED ABOUT THAT."

SO PROGRESS COMES QUICKLY FOR GERRY
FERNANDEZ, JUST ONE OF EIGHT STUDENTS
"IMMERSED" IN THE NEWS FIELD AS REPORTERS
AND PHOTOGRAPHERS. THE STUDENTS WORK 9
TO 6 EACH DAY FOR 12 HOURS OF COLLEGE
CREDIT IN AN EFFORT TO GIVE EAST CENTRAL
INDIANA A NEWS SOURCE. A LOT OF
RESPONSIBILITY THAT DOESN'T ALWAYS COME
EASY, BUT KEVIN O'CONNOR UNDERSTANDS . .
.AND ADJUSTS.

((SOT))

ANDY-"DO YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE DOING THAT
. . IT'S STILL THE FIRST WEEK, ARE YOU OK JUST
GOING OUT ON A STORY AND NOT BEING FOR
SURE?"

KEVIN-"I FEEL PRETTY COMFORTABLE JUST
BECAUSE WE HAVE TO . . SITTING IN HERE, IT'S
NOT GONNA GET DONE . . YOU KNOW, I COULD SIT
HERE ON THE COMPUTER, BUT WE'RE NOT GONNA
GET THE SHOTS THAT WE NEED, WE'RE NOT
GONNA TALK TO THE PEOPLE WE NEED FOR OUR
PACKAGE. THE PACKAGE IS ON THE BOARD, SO
WE REALLY NEED TO GET OUTTA HERE AND GET
IT DONE."

QUESTION: ANDY MARQUIS/FILMMAKER
ANSWER: KEVIN O'CONNOR/IMMERSION
STUDENT

RANDY RANKIN/IMMERSION STUDENT

((SOT))

"THE DEMANDS OF THIS ARE SO HIGH, AND THEN
YOU'RE EXPECTED TO GO TO A WEB CLASS IN
WHICH YOU GOTTA TURN IN STORIES EVERY
WEEK AND DO A PROJECT IN ADDITION TO THIS
AND FIND TIME TO DO THAT AND FIND TIME FOR
426, SO IT'S JUST A MATTER OF PLANNING IN
ADVANCE WHAT YOU GOTTA GET DONE."

KEVIN AND RANDY RANKIN SPEAK FROM THEIR
FIRST WEEK IMMERSION EXPERIENCE, BUT EVEN
STUDENTS WHO AREN'T CURRENTLY IN THE
PROGRAM STILL SEE GOOD REASON TO
PARTICIPATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

((SOT))

CHRIS SOLTESZ/FORMER IMMERSION STUDENT

"THIS PARTICULAR FIELD, THE PEOPLE THAT ARE DOING THE HIRING, THEY DON'T REALLY CARE BOUT GRADES. I MEAN, THEY CARE MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, YOU KNOW THE TV STATIONS AND STUFF LIKE THAT BECAUSE THAT'S THE STUFF YOU'RE GONNA BE DOING WHEN YOU'RE IN THE REAL WORLD."

AND THAT IS WHAT MAKES UP THE MEAT OF WHAT THESE STUDENTS DO EACH DAY. .AS DEREK TUCKER LUGS HIS EQUIPMENT OUT STILL IN THE FIRST WEEK LEARNING HOW TO USE THE CAMERA AND ASK THE RIGHT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS . . BUT BY THE MIDDLE OF THE SEMESTER HERE, HE'S PACKING IT AWAY IN HIS CAR AND HITTING THE ROAD FOR A STORY IN MUNCIE, JOINED BY SVENJA STICKERT, A GERMAN EXCHANGE STUDENT ON HER FIRST REAL STORY, STILL LEARNING AMERICAN CULTURE, BUT ALSO REPORTER'S CURIOSITY.

DEREK TUCKER AND SVENJA
STICKERT/IMMERSION STUDENTS

((SOT))

SVENJA-"WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ASK THESE GUYS?"

DEREK -"PROBABLY WHAT THEY'RE DOING, WHY THEY'RE DOING IT, WHAT THEY'RE DOING . . ."

SVENJA-"SO, WHY THEY VOLUNTEER?"

DEREK-"YEAH"

((NATURAL SOUND BREAK AND MONTAGE))

DEREK PUTS HIS EXPERIENCE TO USE BY TAKING HIS CAMERA TO EVERY ANGLE WHILE ALSO COLLABORATING WITH HIS REPORTER, SVENJA.

ANDY AND DEREK

((SOT))

ANDY-"WHAT DO YOU GOTTA DO NOW TO SET UP FOR THE INTERVIEW?"

DEREK-"I JUST GOTTA CHANGE THE MIC CHANNEL, GET THE MIC READY TO GO, FOCUS IN ON HIM, AND MAKE SURE THE SHOT'S GOOD."

SO THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR OF THIS ROOFING PROJECT MADE HIMSELF AVAILABLE FOR THE TEAM, BUT NEWS STORIES NEED MORE THAN ONE SOURCE, SO . . .

AS THE REPORTER TAKES OFF TO FIND ANOTHER POTENTIAL INTERVIEW . . .(PAUSE)

THE CAMERA OPERATOR SEARCHES FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO "SHOOT" THIS SCENE FOR A NEWS CAST LATER IN THE DAY.

BUT AS WITH MANY STORIES, SUCCESS SOMETIMES ONLY COMES WITH THE COOPERATION OF THOSE COVERED BY THE STORY.

ANDY AND DEREK

((SOT))

ANDY-"WAIT, DEREK, WHAT HAPPENED?"

DEREK-"HE DIDN'T WANT TO BE ON CAMERA."

BUT DEREK AND SVENJA HAD A STORY TO BRING BACK AS WELL AS SOME NEW HELPFUL KNOWLEDGE.

SVENJA STICKERT

((SOT))

"I WAS LIKE, OH MY GOSH, HOW DO I GET OUT OF HERE? I JUST COULD NOT, YOU KNOW, INTERRUPT HIM. I THOUGHT IT WAS RUDE, SO I JUST LET HIM TALK, BUT I GUESS I HAVE TO WORK ON THAT ONE."

WORKING IN NEWS ALSO REQUIRES A KNOWLEDGE OF TERMINOLOGY TO DESCRIBE HOW TO FULLY UTILIZE THE REPORTER, THE CAMERA AND THE CAMERA OPERATOR. COMMUNICATION IS KEY.

CHRIS AND ALYSSA IVANSON/IMMERSION STUDENT

((SOT))

ALYSSA-THAT'S JUST FOR SCRIPT AND THEN B-ROLL."

CHRIS-"OK."

ALYSSA-"BUT FOR STAND-UP POSSIBILITIES, WE'LL SEE WHERE WE GO WITH THE STORY."

ALYSSA IVANSON AND CHRIS ARE WORKING ON A STORY WITH SOME UPS

ALYSSA

((SOT))

"ALRIGHT WE GOT A NAME, SHE'S AT LUNCH, WE'RE COOKIN'"

BUT MORE DOWNS.

ALYSSA

((SOT))

"NOT GOOD."

BUT THEY KEEP IN MIND CERTAIN IDEALS FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE JOBS NO MATTER THE STORY.

ALYSSA AND CHRIS

((SOT))

ALYSSA-"IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU WANNA DO. LIKE, WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT POTENTIAL SHOTS, AND, UM . . .IT'S A FINE LINE, THOUGH, BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT TO SEEM BOSSY ON EITHER END--YOU DON'T WANT THE PHOTOGRAPHER TELLING THE REPORTER HOW TO DO THEIR JOB, AND YOU DON'T WANT THE REPORTER TELLING THE PHOTOGRAPHER HOW TO DO THEIR JOB, BUT YOU JUST HAVE TO BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER AND HAVE A CLEAR VISION THAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH THE SAME TYPE OF STORY, AND THAT WAY THE SHOTS MATCH UP WITH WHAT YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT WRITING ABOUT."

CHRIS-"YOU DON'T GET THE TECHNICAL STUFF RIGHT, WHATEVER TRICKY, CLEVER SHOTS YOU HAVE AREN'T GONNA LOOK GOOD TO BEGIN WITH."

BUT ON THIS DAY, NO MATTER HOW MANY PHONE
CALLS
((NATURAL SOUND OF PHONE DIALING))

ALYSSA

OR VISITS TO STORES, OR POLITE REQUESTS
MADE

((SOT))

"HI, THIS IS ALYSSA IVANSON WITH NEWSLINK
INDIANA. I'M HERE IN TOWN TODAY DOING A
STORY ON THE CINEMA CAFE THAT'S CLOSING
DOWNTOWN."

ALYSSA AND CHRIS

THE STORY CAN STILL FALL THROUGH

((SOT))

ALYSSA-"THIS IS REALLY BAD LUCK FOR ME OR
SOMETHING BECAUSE I'VE NEVER HAD SO MANY
PEOPLE SAY I DON'T WANNA TALK, DON'T WANNA
TALK, DON'T WANNA TALK ALL IN A ROW, YOU
KNOW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON."

CHRIS-"I MEAN, THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS WITH
TV NEWS AND STUFF BECAUSE YOU TALK TO A
REPORTER FROM A NEWSPAPER, THAT'S THE
ONLY THING THEY'RE HOLDING, BUT THEN YOU
HAVE A TV CREW COME IN HERE, AND THERE'S A
REPORTER WITH A NOTEPAD, AND THEN YOU GOT
A CAMERAMAN WITH A HUGE CAMERA, YOU KNOW
...SOMETIMES THAT CAN BE INTIMIDATING."

JENNIFER KINLEY/IMMERSION STUDENT

WHILE CHRIS AND ALYSSA EVENTUALLY MADE IT
IN, GERRY AND JENNIFER KINLEY WERE WORKING
ON A DIFFERENT KIND OF STORY AT AN
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

((SOT))

"I GENERALLY DON'T LIKE TO GO ON THE HARD
STORIES. GERRY'S USUALLY THE ONE THAT GETS
TO GO ON THOSE, AND I FEEL BAD FOR HIM. I
HATE GOING AND SEEING PEOPLE HURT, PEOPLE
IN PAIN. I LIKE THE FLUFFY STUFF."

INGRID GRUBB/STORER ELEMENTARY
PRINCIPAL AND NLI INTERVIEWEE

THE TWO TAKE THEIR JOBS SERIOUSLY EVEN
WHEN IT SEEMS A BIT SILLY, BUT STORER
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL INGRID GRUBB
APPRECIATES THE GROUP'S EFFORT.

((SOT))

"I LIKE THE FACT THAT WE CAN . . IF WE LET YOU
KNOW THAT WE'RE HAVING AN EVENT THAT WE
HAVE SOMEBODY THAT SHOWS UP."

LEE ATHERTON/IMMERSION STUDENT

AS THE SEMESTER NEARS THE END, WE TAKE A
LOOK AT A FAIRLY TYPICAL END OF A NEWSLINK
DAY WITH EDITING FROM LEE ATHERTON AND
DEREK.

((SOT))

LEE- "LOOKING FOR OLD FOOTAGE OF A
CITY/COUNCIL MEETING FOR A PACKAGE THAT I
HAVE NO B-ROLL."

ANDY-"WHAT DOES THAT MEAN WHEN YOU DON'T

DEREK

HAVE B-ROLL, LIKE IS IT JUST STUFF YOU CAN'T SHOOT ANY VIDEO OF?"

LEE-"YES. . . . AND IT'S A PROBLEM."

((SOT))

"I'M TIRED OF YOU EVERY DAY-IT'S LIKE '20 MINUTES, MAN, 20 MINUTES, CAN YOU GIVE ME 20 MINUTES?' I DON'T WANT 20 MINUTES, I NEED 40, 45 MINUTES. I CAN'T GET YOU ANYTHING IN 20 MINUTES. WHAT DO YOU WANT SOLTESZ? WHAT DO YOU WANT?"

BUT WHETHER IT'S THE END OF A DAY OR A SEMESTER, REFLECTION CAN TRULY COME FROM CURRENT STUDENTS AND PAST STUDENTS THAT REMAIN INVOLVED.

STEPHANIE CHAMPLAIN/IMMERSION STUDENT

((SOT))

"I'VE LEARNED SO MUCH THIS SEMESTER JUST FROM BEING IN HERE, DOING THIS DAY IN AND DAY OUT AND THEN GOING OUT AND REPORTING WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS, UM . . . IT'S NOT ALWAYS FUN, AND IT'S REALLY HARD AND CHALLENGING, BUT YOU GET A GOOD REWARD AT THE END."

SARAH GROTE/FORMER IMMERSION STUDENT
AND CURRENT HELPER

((SOT))

"LIKE RATHER THAN DOING SOME OTHER JOB ON CAMPUS LIKE WORKING IN THE LIBRARY OR SOMEWHERE ELSE, I'M ACTUALLY DOING SOMETHING I MIGHT WANT TO DO WITH MY LIFE."

AND IF ANY DOUBTS LINGER ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM, ADVISORS CHRIS BAVENDER AND TERRY HEIFETZ EXPLAIN WHY STUDENTS LOOK FOR STORIES, DRIVE ALL OVER TO FIND THEM, AND END UP EDITING THEM IN THIS STUDIO DAY IN . . . AND DAY OUT.

CHRIS BAVENDER/ANCHOR AND ADVISOR FOR
NEWSLINK INDIANA

((SOT))

"I MEAN, IF YOU COME IN AND FOLLOW WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO, THE STORY IDEAS AND GIVE IT YOUR ALL AND REALIZE SOME DAYS YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET THAT PERSON TO INTERVIEW, AND YOUR STORY MIGHT FALL THROUGH, BUT THAT'S EXACTLY HOW IT IS IN THE REAL WORLD. IT'S WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT."

TERRY HEIFETZ/MANAGING EDITOR AND
ADVISOR FOR NEWSLINK INDIANA

((SOT))

"THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS YOU CAN LEARN IN THE CLASSROOM THAT ARE IMPORTANT . . . THEORY AND KNOWLEDGE, THAT'S ALWAYS VERY IMPORTANT. BUT WHAT IMMERSION PROVIDES IS THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE THAT YOU CAN'T GET IN THE CLASSROOM, AND THAT HELPS YOU GET A JOB. IT HELPS YOU GET THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE REAL WORLD, OF WHAT IT'S REALLY LIKE TO TRY AND INTERVIEW PEOPLE ON A STORY UNDER DEADLINE PRESSURE THAT YOU CAN'T GET IN THE CLASSROOM. SO YOU NEED A COMBINATION OF BOTH, AND IMMERSION PROVIDES THAT. THAT'S WHAT MAKES THAT

BETTER THAN JUST THE STANDARD PROGRAM AT MOST SCHOOLS."

((STAND UP))

"THE NEWSLINK EXPERIENCE IS JUST ABOUT OVER FOR THIS SEMESTER'S GROUP OF REPORTERS, AND THEIR CONFIDENCE SHOWS IT. AS THEY PUT TOGETHER RESUME TAPES FROM THEIR CURRENT WORK FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT, THE NEW GROUP WILL SETTLE IN AND PREPARE FOR A CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING SEMESTER OF IMMERSION."